

Ify Otuya Mental Health Toolkit

10 Effective Communication Skills

Speak with clarity. Listen with intention.

Good communication isn't just about what you say — it's about how you say it, how you listen, and how you show up in the moment. Whether you're navigating everyday conversations or difficult discussions, strong communication skills can reduce tension, build trust, and create deeper connection.

This guide offers tools to help you express yourself more clearly, listen with empathy, and communicate your needs without guilt or confusion. These skills are especially helpful when emotions are high or when it feels hard to say what you truly mean.

Let's explore how effective communication can transform your relationships — and your relationship with yourself.

10 Practical Effective Communication Skills

Here are practical tools to support healthy communication — in mental health, relationships, and everyday interactions:

1. Active Listening

Fully focusing on the speaker—without interrupting, judging, or jumping in to fix. It includes using affirming body language and repeating back what you've heard.

2. Using “I” Statements

Expressing how you feel without blaming others (e.g., “I feel hurt when...” instead of “You always...”). This keeps the conversation calm and respectful.

3. Clear and Concise Expression

Saying what you mean in a simple, direct way. Avoiding vagueness or overly complex explanations helps avoid miscommunication.

4. Nonverbal Communication Awareness

Understanding how facial expressions, tone, gestures, and posture communicate just as much as (or more than) words.

5. Assertiveness (Not Aggressiveness)

Standing up for yourself confidently and kindly. It's the balance between passivity and aggression—respecting your needs *and* others'.

6. Reflective or Empathic Responses

Saying things like “That sounds really tough” or “I hear that you’re feeling...” shows empathy and helps the other person feel seen.

7. Emotional Awareness While Speaking

Being aware of your emotional state so you don't communicate from a place of stress, anger, or defensiveness.

8. Asking Open-Ended Questions

Encouraging deeper conversation and understanding (e.g., “How did that make you feel?” instead of “Are you okay?”).

9. Setting and Respecting Boundaries

Clearly expressing limits and expectations—while also being open to hearing others' boundaries without taking offense.

10. Pausing and Checking for Understanding

Asking things like “Does that make sense?” or “How do you feel about what I said?” to ensure clarity and alignment.

Author's Bio:



Hi, I'm Ify Otuya, a mental health advocate, speaker, and founder of June E-waste Academy. I create empowering mental health content to educate, inspire, and destigmatize mental health struggles. Join me on my journey to mental wellness.

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